

D-783  
Thomas Higgins & Son General Store  
Vienna  
c. 1895 and later  
Private

Thomas Higgins and Son General Store occupies a prominent corner in the center of Vienna's once active commercial district. Initially erected around 1895-96, the two-story, two-bay by four-bay main block is extended on two sides by nearly contemporaneous two-story and single story additions that expanded the floor space of the original building more than double fold. Facing Market Street, the commercial block also fronts Race Street at the principal intersection of the business district that developed along these streets during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Late nineteenth century shutters hardware and other construction features indicate that the store structure was erected during the late 1890s by Thomas Higgins (1815-1900) on a lot he acquired in October 1895. The firm of Thomas Higgins & Son predates the purchase of this corner lot by more than a decade since the firm is listed in the 1884 gazetteer published by R. L. Polk & Co. of Baltimore. Following Thomas Higgins' death in 1900, the family mill and merchant businesses passed to his only son, James Ashland Higgins, who retained title to the general store property until 1919 when it was transferred to his daughter, Elizabeth Higgins Hunt. The corner commercial lot remained in the hands of Elizabeth Higgins Hunt and her husband, Elwood V. Hunt, until 1925 when it was sold to A. Milby Hurst. Hurst family ownership and operation of the business stretched from 1925 until 1966 when the surviving spouse, Zylde L. Hurst, conveyed the property to Robert H. and Gene C. Spear, who conducted Spear's Hardware Store until the early twenty-first century.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-783

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Higgins Hardware Store  
other Spear's Hardware Store

### 2. Location

street and number 101 Market Street not for publication  
city, town Vienna vicinity  
county Dorchester

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Clough Properties, LLC  
street and number P. O. Box 817 telephone-  
city, town Hurlock state MD zip code 21643-0817

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Clerk of Court liber MLB 799 folio 484  
city, town Cambridge tax map 500 tax parcel 89 tax ID number 03-044165

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other:

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> defense	
		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	
		<input type="checkbox"/> education	
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	1
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

## 7. Description

Inventory No. D-783

### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Thomas Higgins & Son General Store, also known more recently as the Spear's Hardware Store, stands on the northwest corner of Market and Race Streets in the center of Vienna, Dorchester County, Maryland. Listed as 101 Market Street, the two-story, two-bay by four-bay frame commercial block is supported on a minimal brick foundation, and the exterior is clad with asbestos shingles. The low pitched hip roof is covered with seamed tin. The rectangular main block is extended on the northwest and southwest side by a combination of two-story and single story wings and/or additions. The interior has been gutted in preparation for a revitalized commercial space, however, work has been halted and the project appears dormant.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The two-story, two-bay by four-bay frame structure that defines the northwest corner of Market and Race Streets is historically known as the Thomas Higgins & Son General Store, and more recently known as Spear's Hardware Store. Located at 101 Market Street, the two-story, two-bay by four-bay frame store building is extended to the southwest by a combination two-story and single-story addition, and to the rear is a single-story shed roofed wing. The entire structure is supported by a minimal brick foundation, and the exterior is clad with asbestos shingles over plain weatherboards fastened with mature cut nails.

Built around 1895-96, the southeast (main) elevation is an asymmetrical façade with the two-story, two-bay elevation of the main block juxtaposed against the single-story section to the southwest. The twentieth century commercial front of the first floor, consisting of a recessed entrance and large display windows currently covered with plywood, extends across the full front of the two-story section and part of the adjacent single-story wing. The second floor of the two-story section is defined by a pair of six-over-six sash windows flanked by later paneled shutters. The base of the hip roof is finished with a plain boxed cornice. The adjacent single-story addition is marked by a separate entrance fitted with a partially glazed door with an adjacent six-pane display window. Above the two first floor openings is a plain wall surface that constitutes a false front disguising the long shed roof that covers the side addition. The second story of the main block above the single-story west side addition is lighted by three six-over-six sash windows. Extending from the back end of the main block is a two-story one-bay wide addition that was clearly added to the main block given the shift in cornice levels.

The northeast side elevation fronting Race Street is a four-bay façade with three four-pane windows defining the first floor and four six-over-six sash windows lighting the second story. The small first floor windows were placed high on the wall surface so as to allow for interior store shelving. Late nineteenth century pintels remain on some of the window openings. Stretching across the northwest (rear) wall of the main block is a single-story addition marked

**Maryland Historical Trust**  
**Maryland Inventory of**  
**Historic Properties Form**

Inventory No. D-783

Name Thomas Higgins & Son General Store  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 7 Page 1

---

by two doors and four three-pane windows. The edge of the shed roof is finished with an extended eave and open soffits typical of the late nineteenth century.

The interior has been gutted largely of original fabric due to a renovation and conversion to a modern retail space. A large chamfered post remains in the center of the two-story main block.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. D-783

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Thomas Higgins and Son General Store, also known more generally as the Higgins Hardware Store, and more recently as the Spear's Hardware Store, occupies a prominent corner in the center of Vienna's once active commercial district. Initially built around 1895-96, the two-story, two-bay by four-bay main block is extended on two sides by nearly contemporaneous two-story and single-story additions that expanded the floor space of the original building more than double fold. For a period during the early twentieth century the southwest secondary entrance opened into a large room used for for a fraternal lodge meetings.

### HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Late nineteenth century hardware and other construction features indicate that the store was erected during the late 1890s by Thomas Higgins (1815-1900) on a lot he had acquired in October 1895.<sup>1</sup> The firm of Thomas Higgins & Son predates the purchase of this corner lot by more than a decade since the firm is listed in the 1884 gazetteer published by R. L. Polk & Co.<sup>2</sup> Following Thomas Higgins death in 1900, the family businesses passed to his son, James Ashland Higgins, who retained title to the general store property until 1919 when it was transferred to James' daughter, Elizabeth Higgins Hunt.<sup>3</sup> The corner commercial property remained in the hands of Elizabeth Higgins Hunt and her husband Elwood V. Hunt until 1925 when it was sold to A. Milby Hurst.<sup>4</sup> Hurst family ownership and operation of the business stretched from 1925 until 1966 when surviving spouse Zylde L. Hurst conveyed the property to

<sup>1</sup> Dorchester County Land Record, CL 29/669, 13 September 1904, Dorchester County Courthouse.

<sup>2</sup> *Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia State Gazetteer and Business Directory*, 1884, Volume 1. R. L. Polk & Co., Baltimore, Maryland, p. 598.

<sup>3</sup> Dorchester County Land Record, WHM 6/377, 6 June 1919, Dorchester County Courthouse.

<sup>4</sup> Dorchester County Land Record, JFD 16/362, 14 May 1925, Dorchester County Courthouse.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-783

Name Thomas Higgins and Son General Store (Higgins Hardware Store)  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 1

---

Robert H. and Gene C. Spear,<sup>5</sup> who conducted Spear's Hardware Store until the early twenty-first century.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Dorchester County Land Record, PLC 145/614, 7 February 1966, Dorchester County Courthouse.

<sup>6</sup> Dorchester County Land Record, 620/205, 20 December 2004, Dorchester County Courthouse.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-783

Name Thomas Higgins and Son General Store (Higgins Hardware Store)

## Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

---

Thomas Higgins and Son General Store  
(Higgins Hardware Store, Spear's Hardware Store)  
101 Market Street  
Vienna, Dorchester County, Maryland

Map 500, Parcel 89

MLB 799/484

Daniel J. Arnold and Anne C. Arnold

to

4.5.2007

Clough Properties, LLC

620/205

Gene C. Spear, Personal Representative of the Estate of  
Robert H. Spear (died on or about 1.15.2004)

to

12.20.2004

Daniel J. Arnold and Anne C. Arnold

PLC 145/614

Zylda L. Hurst

to

2.7.1966

Robert H. Spear and Gene C. Spear, Tenants in common

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-783

Name Thomas Higgins and Son General Store (Higgins Hardware Store)  
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

---

RSM 108/458

Edna M. Wheatley

to

2.11.1958

A. Milby Hurst and Zylde L. Hurst

108/455

A. Milby Hurst and Zylde L. Hurst

to

2.11.1958

Edna E. Wheatley

JFD 16/362

Elizabeth Higgins Hunt and Elwood V. Hunt

to

5.14.1925

A. Milby Hurst

WHM 6/377

James A. Higgins & Others (Alice L. Higgins and Elwood V. Hunt)

to

6.6.1919

Elizabeth Higgins Hunt

(Same land being described in two deeds:

1. from John C. Corkran to Thomas Higgins, dated 10.26.1895, CL 19/603, the said Thomas Higgins died intestate leaving James A. Higgins as sole heir



# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-783

Name Thomas Higgins and Son General Store (Higgins Hardware Store)

## Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 4

---

2. from Emma P. Keys to James A. Higgins, 9.13.1904,  
CL 29/669

CL 29/669

Emma P. Keys, Elkton, Maryland

to

9.13.1904

James A. Higgins

\$500.....

CL 19/603

John C. Corkran and Rachel J. Corkran

to

10.26.1895

Thomas Higgins

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. D-783

Dorchester County Land Record, various volumes, Dorchester County Courthouse.

R. L. Polk, Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1884, Volume I, Baltimore, R. L. Polk & Co.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property	4,816 square feet
Acreage of historical setting	4,816 square feet
Quadrangle name	Mardela Springs, MD

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The metes and bounds of this property are coincidental with the current boundary of the lot.

## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian		
organization	Chesapeake Country Heritage & Preservation	date	12.3.2009
street & number	P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-783

Name Thomas Higgins & Son Store  
**Continuation Sheet**

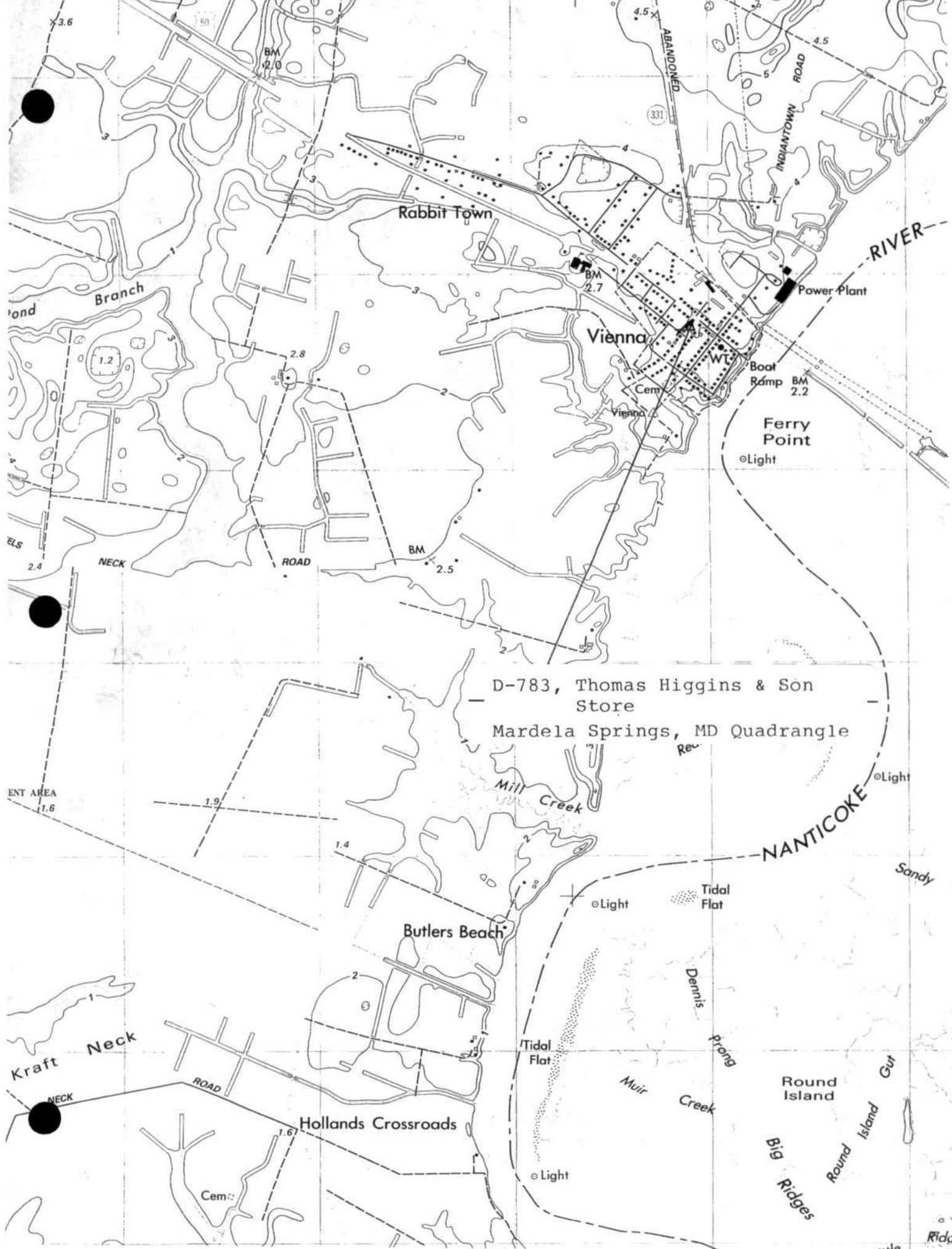
Number 9 Page 1

---

D-783  
Thomas Higgins & Son General Store  
Vienna  
c. 1895 and later  
Private

Thomas Higgins and Son General Store occupies a prominent corner in the center of Vienna's once active commercial district. Initially erected around 1895-96, the two-story, two-bay by four-bay main block is extended on two sides by nearly contemporaneous two-story and single story additions that expanded the floor space of the original building more than double fold. Facing Market Street, the commercial block also fronts Race Street at the principal intersection of the business district that developed along these streets during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Late nineteenth century shutters hardware and other construction features indicate that the store structure was erected during the late 1890s by Thomas Higgins (1815-1900) on a lot he acquired in October 1895. The firm of Thomas Higgins & Son predates the purchase of this corner lot by more than a decade since the firm is listed in the 1884 gazetteer published by R. L. Polk & Co. of Baltimore. Following Thomas Higgins' death in 1900, the family mill and merchant businesses passed to his only son, James Ashland Higgins, who retained title to the general store property until 1919 when it was transferred to his daughter, Elizabeth Higgins Hunt. The corner commercial lot remained in the hands of Elizabeth Higgins Hunt and her husband, Elwood V. Hunt, until 1925 when it was sold to A. Milby Hurst. Hurst family ownership and operation of the business stretched from 1925 until 1966 when the surviving spouse, Zylde L. Hurst, conveyed the property to Robert H. and Gene C. Spear, who conducted Spear's Hardware Store until the early twenty-first century.



D-783, Thomas Higgins & Son  
Store  
Mardela Springs, MD Quadrangle

Kraft Neck

Hollands Crossroads

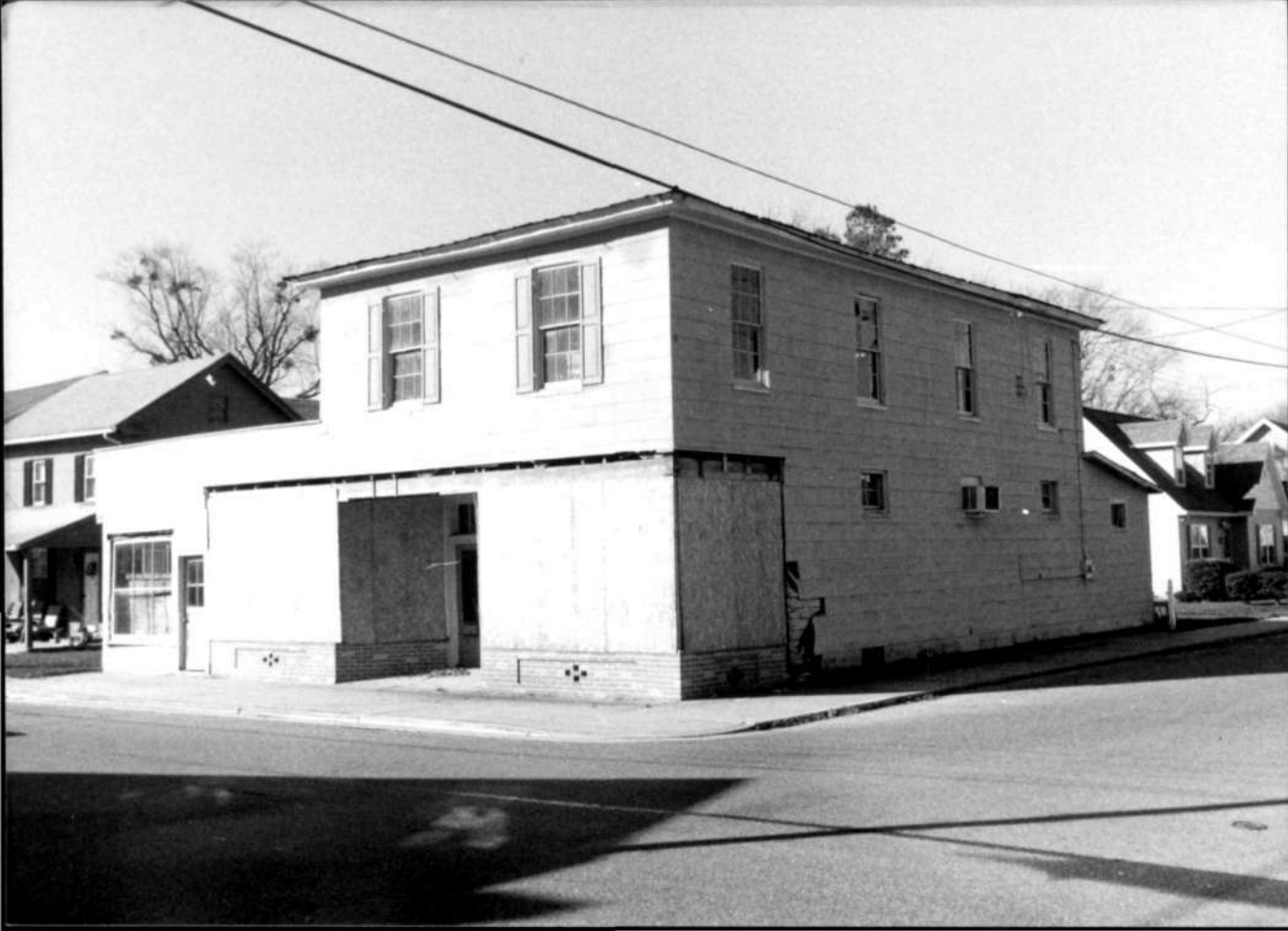
Round Island

Big Ridges

Round Island

Round Island

Round Island



D-783

TITUMAS HIGGINS & SON GENERAL STORE  
VIENNA, DORCHESTER CO., MD.

NORTHEAST ELEVATION

12. 2009, PAUL B. TOWNS, PHOTO.

W&A / MD HISTORICAL TRUST

1 of 2



D-793

TITMUS IGGINS & SON GENERAL STORE  
VIENNA, DORCHESTER CO., MD.

SOUNDWATER ELEVATION

12. 2009, PAUL B. TOWNE, PHOTO.

WEG / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

2 of 2